



U.S. Department of Justice

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Group home caregiver sentenced to 120 days for assault of resident**

Washington, D.C. - United States Attorney Roscoe C. Howard, Jr. and District of Columbia Interim Inspector General Austin A. Andersen announced that Elisha Bemah, 28, of the 5000 block of Jay Street, N.E., was sentenced today to a 120-day term of imprisonment by Senior Judge John R. Hess of D.C. Superior Court, for assaulting a vulnerable adult resident at a group home for mentally retarded individuals in Southeast, Washington, D.C. on August 19, 2003. On March 25, 2004, Judge Hess found Bemah guilty of the assault, which took place while he was employed as a caregiver at the group home. Bemah's term of imprisonment will be followed by a two-year period of probation during which he will be required to complete 200 hours of community service (in a setting without children or vulnerable adults), drug test and undergo any drug treatment required, stay away from the victim and the group home where he resides, and complete anger management and sensitivity training courses.

The Metropolitan Police Department Sixth District, Department of Human Services Incident Management & Investigations Unit (IMIU) and the OIG Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) jointly investigated the assault. The MFCU, which was created in March 2000, handled this case as part of an effort called the Guardian Angel Project (GAP). GAP is a comprehensive program designed to deter and when

appropriate, punish health care providers who intentionally abuse or neglect vulnerable persons under their care. Among the institutions covered by GAP are nursing homes, group homes for adults who are mentally retarded and facilities for mentally ill persons.

In announcing the sentence, United States Attorney Howard and Interim Inspector General Andersen praised the work of Detective Stephen McDonald of the Metropolitan Police Department's 6<sup>th</sup> District and Jonathan Rich, Patient Abuse Coordinator at the MFCU, who jointly investigated the case. Mr. Howard and Mr. Andersen also commended the work of Susan Kennedy, Director of the MFCU, and Assistant United States Attorney Tim Kelly, who jointly prosecuted the case.

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